



Calhoun: The NPS Institutional Archive

Institutional Publications

Naval Postgraduate School Barometer

1973-07-16

The Barometer / v.13-1

Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School

<http://hdl.handle.net/10945/50248>



Calhoun is a project of the Dudley Knox Library at NPS, furthering the precepts and goals of open government and government transparency. All information contained herein has been approved for release by the NPS Public Affairs Officer.

Dudley Knox Library / Naval Postgraduate School
411 Dyer Road / 1 University Circle
Monterey, California USA 93943

<http://www.nps.edu/library>

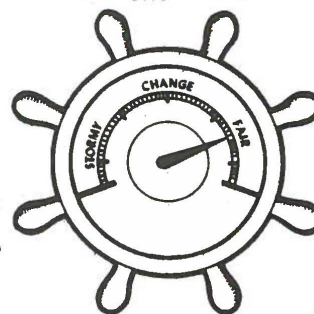


LIBRARY-NAVAL
POSTGRADUATE
SCHOOL

Jul 20 1973

MONTEREY
CALIF 93940

The BAROMETER



VOL.. XIII NO. 1

16 JULY 1973

EDITORS:

LT R. J. BRANCO, SMC #1585

LT L. W. WHEAT, SMC #1092

The BAROMETER is a student newspaper for the exchange of ideas and information concerning the development and improvement of the professional environment at the Naval Postgraduate School.

"The danger to public policy arises from civilian authorities adopting the narrowness of outlook of professional soldiers -- an outlook restricted by training and experience to the use of force. As we have developed into a society whose prominent business is violence, one of the leading professions inevitably is soldiering. Since they are the professionals, and civilian bureaucrats refuse to challenge them, the military have become ardent and effective competitors for power in American society."

Senator J.W. Fulbright, The Pentagon Propaganda Machine, p. 143.

EDITORIAL COMMENT: Civilian control of the Pentagon has always been a controversial issue. Many military leaders have felt that this civilian leadership has stifled the efficiency of the defense establishment, while others have welcomed the support and guidance provided by their non-military counterparts. This article by Brooke Nihart, reprinted with the permission of the ARMED FORCES JOURNAL (January 1973), reports the current views of our civilian and military defense leaders.

FEATURE: CIVILIAN CONTROL STILL AN ISSUE

"WAR IS TOO IMPORTANT to be left to the generals," is how French Premier Georges Clemenceau phrased his view of civilian control as he exercised it over his failing generals on the Western Front. In exclusive interviews with the top civilian and top military leader, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird and JCS Chairman Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, they, in effect agreed.

Civilian control has been virtually unquestioned in principle of practice in the 185 years since the Constitution was framed. Lincoln exercised it fully during the Civil War and the voters rejected an 1864 presidential bid by MGen George McClellan which smacked to them of possible militarization of government. When West Pointers such as Grant and Eisenhower were elected to the presidency their personal control over governmental matters often seemed less than their civilian predecessors and the military hardly could be said to have thrived during those regimes. President Harry S. Truman showed he was boss when he relieved a recalcitrant General MacArthur.

Admiral Moorer told AFJ recently, "I have never known anyone in uniform who did not clearly and fully support civilian control which is part and parcel of our whole system as set up by the Constitution."

In an October letter to Senator John C. Stennis, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee (concerning actions taken as a result of Hearings on the unauthorized air strikes against North Vietnam ordered by MGen John D. Lavelle), Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird said, "There is no evidence of a breakdown in or a threat to civilian control of the military."

In answer to a question during an interview on the present status of civilian control, Laird said, "I've watched it for about 20 years as a Congressman and Secretary of Defense. I do not have the concern I once had in this area. I think we have been able to improve civilian control. It is up to the Secretary of Defense and the President. It is their responsibility under the Constitution and the National Security Act to exercise that control."

Despite such disclaimers, critics of the Pentagon show a lack of understanding of what civilian control is and how it is applied. The lack of understanding is compounded partly of misinformation and partly of frustration over a costly, unwon, and, to some, wrong war; to continued defense expenditures at what they feel is too high a level; and to intrusions into the civilian sector such as military investigations of civilians. The critics fail to realize that civilian authority insures neither liberty nor peace, viz., the civilian decision to oppose the invasion of North Vietnam; to continue high levels of defense spending to counteract the expansionist policies of Russia (meanwhile tasking the Army with aiding the surveillance of dissident activists); to pull the troops out of Vietnam; to cut defense spending in real dollars or purchasing power back to the 1950s \$50-billion-level (even with a price tag reading \$80-billion in inflated dollars); to order the Army to end surveillance of civilians. The critics' hang-up seems to be the nature of the military policy with which they disagree. They assume that it is made by the military for the military without reference to civilian authority. Such is not the case, according to Laird and Moorer.

WHO CONTROLS, WHO COMMANDS

Admiral Moorer brought out forcibly that, "the duties of the Joint Chiefs are to provide direction to the Armed Forces and advice to the Secretary of Defense and the President. The Joint Chiefs do not make policy, do not approve budgets, do not issue directives to the military forces without civilian approval. In fact, the law specifically states that the Joint Chiefs do not command and so you have, in that sense, civilian control. I think there is a distinction, too, between civilian control and civilian command. I think that command in the field should be by professionals ... once one begins to execute a military operation today, when weapons are so complex and destructive, professionalism is required across the board."

"Since I have been Chairman," Moorer said, "and the same thing applied during General Wheeler's time and I'm sure before him, a directive has never left this building requiring combat action on the part of U.S. forces that was not initialed by the Secretary of Defense. I testified to this before the Congress and I can document it."

Emphasizing the close control he has over operations, Secretary Laird said he approves all ship movements himself. "I assign and word every operating authority," he said. Operating authorities are the orders to the field initiating operations and setting their limits. Laird feels that with the newly instituted Unified Command inspector general system he can quickly and accurately verify their execution.

The new, not-yet-appointed, Deputy Secretary of Defense (Operations) will be used to monitor these operational matters, Laird said. "Take the movement of ships, I approve those myself, now. I know and approve every ship on the line now and the changes that will be made tomorrow. I watch those things; that's what keeps you up at night getting night telephone calls. It would be helpful to have someone like the new Deputy Secretary to help in that area."

"We do not expect our civilian superiors to accept our advice," Admiral Moorer told AFJ, "but we do have a right to expect them to listen to it." And the civilians do listen, according to Secretary Laird. Asked what advice he would give to a new civilian subordinate in this regard, Laird said he would tell him that the best advice and best leadership is represented in the Joint Chiefs and the Chairman, and that their recommendations must be considered. Laird agreed that the Joint Chiefs accept decisions better when they have had an opportunity to present their case and make recommendations. "They know they can walk into this office any time," Laird emphasized, "They don't have to have an appointment or anything else; they know they always have free access to me and their Service Secretaries."

We asked Admiral Moorer what instructions he might give a senior officer on how to interact better with civilian leadership to make civilian control more effective and make military participation in the interaction more productive. He said he would tell them, "to communicate with the civilians and to give advice freely but when the decision was made, don't try to undercut it...you should either support it or get out, but don't you undercut it by slipping around to the back door and leaking the disagreement to somebody to publicize it."

Laird, who reversed the policies of his predecessors by listening more to military advice in what he calls "participatory management," said that one thing he would advise new civilian officials to do to continue the effectiveness of civilian control would be to give the military, "An understanding of what the fiscal restraints are so that they will try to assign some priorities on the basis of their best military judgment. That gives them a greater input into their programs than they have ever had before. Formerly, when they were told there were no restraints at all the impact of their recommendations becomes very small but if they are given various ranges of fiscal constraints within the department then the impact of their recommendations takes on greater significance but you are also able to have better military judgment and better military advice that way. And they feel they can see the significance of their recommendations and you don't have some other civilian shop such as Systems Analysis making the decision for them. I get the best kind of military advice that way."

The Blue Ribbon Defense Panel of two years back recommended a second Deputy Secretary of Defense be appointed to oversee operations. Congress, this past year, authorized the post. As a result of the Lavelle case, Laird set up an inspector general system within the unified commands to check on operations. Previously, only the Services had an inspector general system which was concerned with internal matters, mainly administration and discipline. We asked Laird about both the new deputy and the new IG.

Laird's answer to what sort of man he had recommended for the deputy's job suggested that he was a current insider with Pentagon experience. Laird said "He has to be someone who understands how the Services operate because you have to be tough in the minds of anyone that they are responsible to you all the way down the line." He said the decision would be made "within the next couple of weeks" which put it just before Christmas. However, he pointed out that his successor, Elliot Richardson, "may not divide the responsibility (one deputy for operations and one for administration and procurement) as I would."

Referring to the Lavelle case again, Laird said; "I believe that I was let down a bit and I want to make sure that there is an investigative machinery set up that is more adequate than the present (Service IG) investigative machinery." Laird's response has been to set up an IG on the staff of all unified commanders, "with responsibility to inspect Service component commands on military operational matters, particularly as they involve command and control, and to report to the Secretary of Defense through the Joint Chiefs of Staff," as he wrote to Senator Stennis. Laird said that reports are coming in to him now but that the new Secretary of Defense may do it differently. "Orders have gone out and it is in effect," Laird said of the new IG system. "I can quickly verify every operating authority and directive now," he added.

Asked how the new IG reporting system would work, Admiral Moorer said that reports would come into the JCS, "...if the problem is one of even the remotest interest to the Secretary of Defense, he'll know about it. The JCS will not only give him the report and our opinion as to its validity but we will give him our recommendation as to what corrective measures to take. That's the normal way we operate. If the Secretary wants an inspection made or a report on a certain subject, he instructs us and it gets done, that's all."

POLITICIAN OR MANAGER?

The phenomenon of the past four years has been the willing acceptance of Laird's leadership by the Services. A phenomenon because it has been an era of drastically reduced budgets and manpower which in the past has resulted in wails of anguish and "end runs" to Congress to get appropriations denied them by the Secretary. The stewardship of Laird, the warm, human, wise politician, has been in marked contrast to the longer regime of his predecessor Robert S. McNamara, the cold, efficient, manager. McNamara presided in an era of expanding defense budgets and manpower yet by his "overcontrol" of the Services and disregard for their professional advice managed to make them hate every minute of it.

Because of the difference between the two approaches to civilian control—one that misused it badly and the other that made it effective—we asked Secretary Laird whether he thought that a person with a political background was more fitted for the post than one with a managerial or academic career. He said that four years ago, "I did suggest that because of the problems this Department was going to have, not only as to public acceptability but also as to congressional concern, the President should have someone who had had a background in Congress. And that is why I suggested Scoop Jackson (Senator

Henry Jackson). He backed out at the last minute and I kind of got trapped...that is not the right word," Laird laughed. I got involved and left Congress to do this job. I do think my political background helped but what helped me the most was listening to Defense Budget hearings for 16 years on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee."

We asked Admiral Moorer which type of Secretary he thought was best for the exercise of civilian control. He said the Secretary, "in a broad sense must understand the interplay between political and military actions; he must understand the goals set by the President as Commander in Chief. I think that it would be difficult for me to say that one individual by virtue of his background would be better in this role than another. I think it depends on an individual's basic intelligence, it depends a hell of a lot on his energy and his willingness to dig out the facts and keep abreast."

In concluding the interview Admiral Moorer pointed out that a vital corollary to civilian control is military professionalism. "We must rely on our Constitutional system and the good judgment of elected civilian officials to keep us free," he said. "If this democracy is to get the protection it expects from its military establishment it must receive sound and clear military advice and the execution of the most professional manner possible. The tremendous power of destruction of modern weapons allow no other course," he said.

"Without this professionalism, which I think we definitely have today," Moorer continued, "the military cannot effectively respond to civilian control." Admiral Moorer then pointed out that professionalism is not an automatic attribute granted to the Armed Forces. Among other factors, it depends on pride and discipline. And professionalism as well as pride and discipline can slip away if we, the American people, are not sufficiently concerned. They can only be maintained through the support of the American people."

Moorer said that the Services can and do instill pride in their men and maintain discipline. He emphasized in conclusion, however, "that pride will not long be an outstanding characteristic of our Armed Forces if service in them is not looked upon with pride and respect by our people. Discipline will not be maintained in our Armed Forces if our citizens encourage desertion and acts of disobedience on the part of our military men and women. All can't serve in uniform but those who do not desire to do so must consider their obligations as citizens to support those who do serve even if it is only by passing a word of encouragement to the servicemen and women he meets."

"I'll say once again," he ended, "there is no question but that everyone in uniform completely supports the concept of civilian control. I've never heard anyone express otherwise and I think our system provides for complete civil control."

FEATURE: MERCHANT FLEETS: NIXON LAGS ON '68 PROMISE

IN SEPTEMBER 1968 presidential candidate Richard M. Nixon promised, in a speech in Seattle, to support a major shipbuilding program to increase the share of U.S. trade carried by American flagships from what was then a 5.6% rate to a rate of "over 30%" by the mid-seventies.

In mid-March 1972 U.S. Maritime Administrator Andrew Gibson told Congress the percentage of U.S. cargo carried in U.S. bottoms had declined to a low of 4.2% in 1969, but since then had crawled back up to a 5.5% rate in 1971.

The "Nixon Maritime Program for the Seventies" is obviously lagging, but Gibson indicated there will be a speed-up in the next several years. Construction was initiated on 12 new U.S. merchant vessels and 11 conversions in FY 71, an estimated 27 starts will be made in FY 72, and 16 new ships, plus an unspecified number of conversions, are planned for FY 73, Gibson told Congress in requesting \$250-million in ship construction subsidies for the next fiscal year.

Among other starts in the FY 73 program originally planned, according to Maritime Administration officials, are to roll-on/roll-off (ro-ro) ships, one barge ship (LASH), three shell tankers, four very large crude carriers (VLCC) of 250,000 deadweight tons (DWT) each, four liquid natural gas (LNG) ships, one sealand containership, and two conversions.

Additional ships may be built under MSC (Military Sealift Command) auspices. MSC is planning construction of nine 25,000 ton-tankers under a "charter and build" plan, which involves no DoD money for ship construction. MSC also has been seeking a green light for construction of MPS (Multi-Purpose Ships) or MMS (Multi-Mission Ships) vessels to augment its dwindling in-house fleet, but reportedly may be willing to settle, in extremis, for a few LASH, Ro-Ro, and containerships of its own.